

Guidance and Advice
K24
Established Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research
National Cancer Institute

I. IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The guidance and advice offered below are derived from a National Institutes of Health (NIH) Program Announcement (title: Midcareer Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research: PA-00-005) issued in the NIH Guide on October 8, 1999 and an addendum issued June 27, 2000. These have been adapted to the cancer-specific career development strategies of the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and can be accessed directly by "clicking on" the following websites:

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-00-005.html>
(original Program Announcement)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CA-00-020.html>
(NCI definition of independent research)

After consulting the official announcements above, the information and clarifications provided below together with the Form PHS 398 application kit should be all that you need to prepare an application for an NCI Established Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research or **K24**.

II. BACKGROUND:

The NCI Established Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research (**K24**) is designed to provide clinicians protected time to devote to patient-oriented research and to act as mentors for beginning clinical investigators. This award provides support for five years for candidates holding clinical doctoral degrees to further develop their skills in patient-oriented research in order to enable them to expand their potential for significant contributions to their field, and to serve as a mentor and role model for beginning clinical researchers. The award can be renewed for an additional 5-year period. ***For the purposes of this award, patient-oriented research is defined as research conducted with human subjects (or on material of human origin such as tissues, specimens, and cognitive phenomena) for which an investigator directly interacts with human subjects. This area of research includes: 1) mechanisms of human disease; 2) therapeutic interventions; 3) clinical trials, and; 4) the development of new technologies.***

The NCI is especially interested in increasing the number of scientists trained to conduct high-quality clinical research. Accordingly, this award forms an important component of the NCI's participation in the NIH initiative to attract and retain talented individuals to the challenges of patient-oriented research. With a view towards achieving the objectives of the NIH initiative, the NCI uses the Established Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research or **K24** to stabilize clinical research settings and to prevent an interruption in trainee mentoring. This initiative is consistent with the recommendations of the NIH Director's Panel on Clinical Research (<http://www.nih.gov/news/crp/97report/index.htm>) and the recommendations from the Institute of Medicine Committee on Addressing Career Paths for Clinical Research.

III. ELIGIBILITY:

1. **Institution:** Applications may be submitted on behalf of candidates by domestic, non-Federal organizations, public or private, such as medical, dental, or nursing schools or other institutions of higher education.

2. **Candidate:** Candidates for this award **must** have a health-professional doctoral degree or its equivalent. Such degrees include but are not limited to the M.D., D.O., D.D.S., D.M.D., O.D., D.C., Pharm.D., N.D. (Doctor of Naturopathy), as well as doctorally prepared nurses. In addition, individuals holding the Ph.D. degree may apply for the award if they normally perform clinical duties. This would include clinical psychologists, clinical geneticists, speech and language pathologists, and other doctoral level clinicians. Candidates must commit up to 50 percent effort (**at least 25%**) to conducting patient-oriented research **and** mentoring. The remainder may be devoted to other clinical, teaching, or research pursuits consistent with the objectives of the award.

Candidates must have independent research support at the time of application for this program. This support could include NIH awards or awards from other sources. The NCI specifically interprets this to mean that all candidates must have independent research support in patient-oriented research as either NIH awards or awards equivalent NIH peer-reviewed support. This would not include support from industry.

Generally, candidates **must** have completed their specialty training and obtained the necessary certifications to practice medicine within approximately 15 years of submitting the application, but exceptions to this last requirement can be made on a case by case basis. For example, an interruption in career progression due to family, military, or other personal circumstances might justify eligibility for candidates with more than 15 years of experience since the completion of clinical training. Candidates are advised to discuss their eligibility with NCI staff (see section **XI. INQUIRIES (K24)**).

Minorities, women and individuals with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

At the time of award, candidates **must** be citizens or non-citizen nationals of the United States, or must have been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence (i.e., in possession of a currently valid Alien Registration Receipt Card I- 551, or other legal verification of such status). Non-citizen nationals are generally persons born in outlying possessions of the United States (i.e., American Samoa and Swains Island). **Individuals on temporary visas are not eligible.**

A candidate for the NCI Established Investigator Award In Patient-Oriented Research or **K24** may not concurrently apply for any other PHS award that duplicates the provisions of this award.

Recipients of this award are required to hold independent research support, **either Federal or private**, during the entire period of this award. The NCI interprets independent support as noted above, but it is the policy of the NCI that should recipients of this award lose their independent research support, they will be given up to one-year to regain it before the NCI takes any action to terminate the K24 grant. Awardees they may not receive additional salary compensation on another Federal award that exceeds the maximum allowable Federal salary compensation (for information on maximum allowable salary, see section **XI. INQUIRIES (K24)**).

IV. MECHANISM OF SUPPORT:

Awards in response to this program announcement will use the **K24 mechanism**. Planning, direction, and, execution of the program will be the responsibility of the candidate on behalf of the applicant institution. The project period may be for up to five years(at least three years are required). **Awards are renewable for one additional five-year** period if the candidate still meets the stated eligibility requirements above.

V. ALLOWABLE COSTS:

The NCI Established Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research or **K24** provides for the following costs:

1. **Salary:** The NCI will provide salary for the award recipient for levels of effort between 25 and 50 percent. The actual salary provided by the award is based on the candidate's full-time, 12-month institutional salary and the level of effort requested up to the maximum salary rate in effect legislated by Congress for Federal workers at the time of award. If you are not certain of the current allowable maximum salary level, contact NCI staff (see section **XI. INQUIRIES (K24)**) In all cases, the salary level **must** be consistent both with the established salary structure of the institution and with salaries actually provided by the institution from its own funds to other staff members of equivalent qualifications, rank, and responsibilities in the department concerned. If full-time, 12-month salaries are not currently paid to comparable staff members, the salary proposed must be appropriately related to the existing salary structure. The award will also provide fringe benefits on the calculated base salary at the established institutional rate. The institution may supplement the NIH contribution to the salary up to a level that is consistent with the institution's salary scale. Institutional supplementation of salary must not require extra duties or responsibilities that would interfere with the purpose of the **K24** award.

Recipients of this award may derive additional compensation for effort associated with other Federal sources or awards provided the total salary derived from all Federal sources does not exceed the maximum legislated salary rate and the total percent effort does not exceed 100 percent.

2. **Research Development Support:** Up to \$25,000 in direct costs per year may be requested for research and development expenses: (a) research expenses, such as supplies, equipment and technical personnel for the principal investigator and his/her mentored clinical investigators; (b) travel to research meetings or training; (c) statistical services including personnel and computer time.
3. **Ancillary Personnel Support:** Salaries for secretarial, and administrative assistance etc., are not allowed.
4. **Facilities and Administrative costs (formerly called indirect costs):** These costs will be reimbursed at 8 percent of modified total direct costs.
5. **Other general policies related to costs:**
 - a. Prior approval for travel to a **foreign laboratory** is required only if the stay exceeds 3 months. Support from the career award will continue during such leave. However, provisions for continued mentoring of any research supervisees must be made;
 - b. A candidate may request up to a 12 month **leave of absence** without award support. Such leave requires prior written approval from the NCI;
 - c. The NCI will consider a **change of institution and other unusual actions**. The request for change must be made in writing to the NCI Program Director.

For appropriate advice and specific instruction regarding the above and other budgetary and administrative policies that you must follow in managing this award, please refer to section **XI. INQUIRIES**.

VI. SPECIAL PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Research Support:** At the time of and throughout the duration of the **K24** award, the candidate **must** have active research support to conduct **patient-oriented research**.
2. **Research and Mentoring:** There **must** be both a research and a mentoring component in the funded application to satisfy the intent and purpose of the K24 award.
3. **Evaluation:** In carrying out its stewardship of human resource related programs, **the NCI or the NIH** may request information essential to an assessment of the effectiveness of this program. Accordingly, recipients may be contacted after the completion of this award for periodic updates

on various aspects of their employment history, publications, support from research grants or contracts, honors and awards, professional activities, and other information helpful in evaluating the impact of the program.

VII. APPLICATION PROCEDURES:

SUBMISSION, REVIEW AND AWARD OF COMPETING APPLICATIONS

A. Application, Receipt, Review and Award Dates:

The receipt dates for all **new** competing **K24** applications are February 1, June 1, and October 1. The receipt dates for all **competing continuation K24** applications are March 1, July 1, and November 1. Peer review by an NCI initial review group for the above receipt dates is usually completed in June, October and February, respectively. Review by the National Cancer Advisory Board is usually completed by October, January, and May, respectively. The earliest possible award dates are December 1, April 1 and July 1, respectively.

B. Where to send the application:

An **original and three copies** of the application should be submitted to the Center for Scientific Review (CSR) , NIH, according to the instructions in PHS Form 398 (rev. 4/98 and subsequent revisions) to:

Center For Scientific Review
National Institutes Of Health
6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 1040 - MSC 7710
Bethesda, Md 20892-7710
Bethesda, MD 20817 (For express/courier service)

To expedite the review process, **two additional copies** should be sent to:

Referral Officer
Division Of Extramural Activities
National Cancer Institute
6116 Executive Boulevard, Room 8062
MSC 8319
Bethesda, MD 20892-8329
Rockville, MD 20852 (For express/ courier service)

C. Format for Submitting the Application:

In submitting an NCI Established Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research or K24 use the grant application Form PHS 398 (last revised 4/98). In general, follow the special instructions provided in the Form PHS 398 on pages IV-1 through IV-7 and page LL using the modified instructions provided below. You can obtain the forms directly by "clicking on" the following NIH website address: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/phs398/phs398.html>. Forms are available at most institutional offices of sponsored research and from the Division of Extramural Outreach and Information Resources, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, MSC 7910, Bethesda, MD 20892-7910, Phone (301) 435-0714, FAX: (301) 480-0525, Email: grantsinfo@nih.gov.

Notes of Caution:

1. **Type density and size** must conform to the instructions on page 6 of the general instructions for Form PHS 398. If they do not, the application may be returned to you by CSR without review.
2. **Human subjects:** Applicants proposing to conduct research involving human subjects, which by definition will include all **K24** applicants, **must** adequately address all the issues described in Form PHS 398, Items 9d and 9e (pages 16-18) and Item F. If these items are not adequately addressed, your application could be returned without review.

General Advice in Preparing an Application:

1. It is highly recommended that you make regular reference to the Review Criteria under section **VIII. REVIEW PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA** during the preparation of your application. Success in addressing these criteria will determine the competitiveness of your application for funding.
2. Please note that on Page LL you are required to indicate whether you are a U.S. citizen or noncitizen national OR a permanent resident of the U.S. **If you are a permanent resident, you must provide to the NCI a notarized statement to this effect before an award can be made.**

Modified Instructions For the Preparation of a K24 Application:

The special instructions in the Form PHS 398 application kit for Research Career Awards (pages IV-1 through IV-7 and page LL) are for mentored awards and do not entirely apply to the K24 award. **Letters of Reference, information about the Career Development/Training Activities During Award Period, and Statements by Sponsor(s) are NOT REQUIRED.** Accordingly, the instructions below have been adapted to accommodate the PHS Form 398 and the special needs of the **K24** grant:

1. **FACE PAGE:** Use page AA as instructed in the Form PHS 398. Don't forget to fill in item **1. Title of Project** with a title that is representative of your research. For item **2. Response to Specific Request for Applications or Program Announcement**, include the number (starting with PAR-) and title of the announcement in the NIH Guide for the **K24** (i.e., "Midcareer Career Investigation Award in POR").
2. **DESCRIPTION AND PERSONNEL:** Use page 2-BB and prepare as instructed. List only your name (i.e., the candidate/principal investigator).
3. **TABLE OF CONTENTS** (Adapted from page LL to accommodate the **K24**) to be organized as follows:

| <u>Content</u> | <u>Page Number</u> |
|---|--------------------|
| Section I: Basic Administrative Data | |
| a. Face Page | |
| b. Description/ Key Personnel | |
| c. Table of Contents | |
| d. Budget for Entire Proposed Period of Support (Form Page EE) | |
| e. Biographical Sketches (Form Page FF) | |
| • Principal Investigator | |
| • Others | |
| f. Other Support for Principal Investigator (Format Pages GG) | |
| g. Resources (Form Page HH) | |
| Section II: Specialized Information | |
| h. Introduction to Revised Application (when applicable) | |
| i. The Candidate | |
| • Candidate's Research Background | |
| • Candidate's Mentoring Background | |
| • Overall Career Goals and Objectives | |
| j. Career Development Objectives Justifying the Need for this Award | |
| k. Environment and Institutional Commitment to Candidate | |
| l. Research Plan | |
| Percent Effort on this grant(K24) to be committed to Research. | |
| <u>Currently Supported Research:</u> | |
| • Statement of Hypotheses and Specific Aims | |
| • Background, Significance, and Rationale | |
| • Preliminary Studies and Results | |
| • Research Design and Methods | |
| • Percent effort commitment | |

New Research to be Specifically Supported by This Grant (K24):

- Hypothesis and Specific Aims
- Significance and Rationale
- Research Design and Methods

m. Mentoring Plan

Percent Effort on this grant (K24) to be committed to Mentoring

- kinds of and availability of clinicians who will be recruited for mentoring
- educational and research experiences that will be provided
- specific role as mentor in preparing the trainee for an independent research career in patient-oriented research.

n. Human Subjects

o. Vertebrate Animals

p. Literature Cited

q. Consortium/ Contractual Arrangements

r. Consultants

s. Appendix (Five collated sets. No page numbering necessary)

Number of Publications (not to exceed six):

List of key items:

4. BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH: Since the **K24** is an unmentored award, provide information for yourself as the candidate only, using Form Page 6-FF and the Additional Instructions for the Form PHS 398 on Page IV-3. List all education, professional degree and specialty training. Enter in **BOLD** the information for the latest specialty training, including the type of training or certification and the date it was completed.
5. OTHER SUPPORT (PHS Form 398, Page IV-3): A candidate for a **K24** award must have active research support at the time of application. A listing of all sources of active research support and pending research support for the candidate's research must be provided, following the format on Format Page 7 (Page GG) of the general instructions for the Form PHS 398.
6. CANDIDATE'S BACKGROUND: See modified Table of Contents above for topical headings. The reviewers must have a clear view of your research background and your experience as a mentor of **clinical researchers**. With regard to the latter, it would be helpful to the reviewers to provide the number of years of mentoring experience, the capacity in which you served as a mentor (i.e., research advisor, clinical mentor, etc.), the number of clinicians mentored, the specialties of the individual mentored and the stages in their professional career. The reviewers would be able to develop a complete understanding of your success as mentor if you describe the types of research that were conducted by the individuals mentored, and the proportion of mentored individuals currently in academic medicine and/or directly participating in patient-oriented research.
7. CAREER DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES JUSTIFYING THE NEED FOR THE K24 AWARD: It is important to convey to the reviewers your reasons for needing protected time to continue a vital research program and continue to engage in the mentoring of new scientists. It should be clear that this award will allow you to spend more time on research and mentoring and less time on administrative and clinical responsibilities for the institution.
8. ENVIRONMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO THE CANDIDATE: Use the instructions in Form PHS 398, Page IV-5. Within this part of the application, it would be helpful to the reviewers to understand what duties and responsibilities in the institution that you are being relieved of to focus on research and mentoring AND how the institution will accommodate these activities with other staff.
9. RESEARCH PLAN (Form PHS 398, Page IV-6 and General Instructions, Pages 15-16): It is important to indicate your **per cent effort** on this **K24** award that will be devoted specifically to research.

This is a **REQUIRED** component of the application.

The Research Plan should be presented in two separate parts:

- a. Ongoing peer-reviewed, funded **patient-oriented research** (research support is **REQUIRED** at the time of and throughout the duration of the **K24** award)
There is no need to provide extensive detail with regard to ongoing, funded research. Enough information should be provided in the areas of Hypotheses and Specific Aims; Background, Significance and Rationale; Preliminary Studies and Results; and Research Design and Methods to permit the peer reviewers to evaluate the extent, special features and general quality of your research activities.

- b. Proposed **new** research activities:

You should describe in greater detail how this award will be used to help you refine your research skills and/or develop new directions in **patient-oriented research**. This should be presented as a Statement of Hypothesis and Specific Aims; Background, Significance and Rationale; and Research Design and Methods. This is an **important** part of the application because it will provide the main rationale and justification for your need to have "protected time" for research.

Although it is likely that most of the described research will be ongoing, the candidate must ensure that the inclusion of women, members of minority groups and their subpopulations, and children, has been addressed in the development of the design for all ongoing and proposed patient-oriented research. The candidate must provide for each new research project proposed the information described in the General Instructions in Form PHS 398 on pages 16-17; and must provide verification that these issues have been adequately addresses in ongoing patient-oriented research.

10. MENTORING PLAN:

It is important to indicate your **per cent effort** on this **K24** award that will be devoted specifically to mentoring.

The Mentoring Plan is a **REQUIRED** component of the application. The plan should include a description of the availability of clinicians for mentoring, the previous training and specialization of these individuals, plans for recruitment and supervision, the types of educational and research experiences that will be provided, and the capacity in which the applicant for the **K24** award will serve as a mentor.

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS/APPLICATION FOR CONTINUATION

The NIH Center for Scientific Review will automatically notify you and give you instructions **four months** before the next anniversary date of your application for continuation. Look for this notification; if you do not receive it, call the NIH Data Management Branch at (301) 435-0896. The awardee must submit the application for continuation at least **two months** prior to the anniversary date of the grant. If for some reason time becomes an issue, contact the NCI (see XI. INQUIRIES). Please make a reasonable adaption of the special instructions on pages IV-1 through IV-2 in the Form PHS 2590; organize the continuing application similarly to the competing application, as instructed above, clearly distinguishing progress in research and mentoring. The Form PHS 2590 (i.e., Application for Continuation of a Public Health Service Grant) can be obtained by "clicking on" the following NIH website: <http://www.nih.gov/grants/funding/2590/2590.htm>. Forms are also available from the same sources noted above for competing applications.

VIII. REVIEW PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA (for competing applications)

A. Review Procedure:

Upon receipt, applications will be reviewed initially by both CSR and the NCI for completeness and for conformance to all eligibility requirements (see Section III. **ELIGIBILITY** above). Applications that are incomplete or ineligible or that obviously do not meet the intent of the NCI Established Investigator Award in Patient-Oriented Research or **K24** will be returned without further consideration.

Those applications judged to be both complete and responsive to the intent of the **K24** will be evaluated for scientific and technical merit by a standing peer review group convened by the *Division of Extramural Activities* in the NCI. This review group will be specialized in evaluating patient-oriented research and will assign a merit score (i.e., priority score) to each application based upon the merit of the application. Applications will receive a second level review by the National Cancer Advisory Board (NCAB) to determine if the application meets the broad program needs and priorities of the NCI and the National Cancer Program.

B. Review Criteria:

The following review criteria will be applied:

1. Candidate:
 - Quality of the candidate's academic and clinical record, including capabilities and commitment to serve as a mentor;
 - Evidence of ongoing high-quality patient-oriented research and the relationship of that research to the proposed K24 program;
 - Potential to conduct quality patient-oriented research;
 - Commitment to a continuing career in patient-oriented research;
 - A record of monetary support for patient-oriented research.
2. Research plan:
 - Appropriateness of the research plan as a vehicle for demonstrating skills and capabilities in patient-oriented research to prospective trainee clinicians;
 - Scientific and technical merit of the proposed research;
 - Appropriateness of the content and duration of the proposed research program;
 - Relevance of the proposed research to the candidate's career objectives;
 - Availability of adequate resources to conduct the research program;
 - Demonstration that the proposed program and protected time will relieve the candidate from non-research patient care and administrative duties and allow the candidate to devote the additional time to patient-oriented research;
 - Adequacy of the plan's attention to gender and minority issues associated with projects involving human subjects;
 - Adequacy of plans for including children as appropriate for the scientific goals of the research, or justification for exclusion.
3. Mentoring Plan:
 - Experience and potential to serve as a mentor;
 - Adequacy of the plans for mentoring and preparing clinicians for independent patient-oriented research;
 - Appropriateness of the proposed level of effort committed to the mentoring component.
4. Environment and Institutional Commitment:
 - Applicant institution's commitment to the scientific development of the candidate and assurances that the institution intends the candidate to be an integral part of its research program;
 - Adequacy of research facilities and the availability of appropriate educational opportunities;
 - Quality and relevance of the environment for scientific and professional development of candidate and trainees pursuing patient-oriented research;
 - Applicant institution's commitment to provide adequate **protected time** for the conduct of the research and mentoring programs.

IX. AWARD CRITERIA:

Soon after the National Cancer Advisory Board approves the application, NCI staff will notify the applicant of his/her funding status. Awards are made based on the availability of funds each fiscal year, the scientific merit of the application as judged by peer reviewers, and the Program priorities of the National Cancer Institute.

X. COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

1. Since human subjects are to be involved in my **K24** program and I currently have Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for my ongoing research, do I still need IRB approval for this award?

You will be required to obtain IRB approval for any NEW research that is being proposed involving human subjects. Ongoing research with prior IRB approval does not need additional approval.

2. Where do I send my **K24** application?

All grant applications are sent to one address that is cited in the Form PHS 398 application kit. The Center for Scientific Review receives all applications and distributes them to the appropriate institutes and centers. The institutes and centers operate and manage the peer review groups that review your application for scientific merit.

3. Can a **K24** be awarded for less than 5 years?

Yes. The length of the award is determined by the peer review committee. However, we recommend that everyone submit a grant for five years of support. It would be highly unusual for a review committee to perceive a problem that would result in a reduction of the grant period to less than five years.

4. I do not have an NIH research grant but do have independent research support from other sources. Am I still eligible to apply for a **K24**?

The NCI has a special policy that applies to the independent, patient-oriented research support required to be eligible for the K24 award. This policy **does not include industrial support** and can be located at the following website address: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CA-00-020.html>

5. Am I eligible to apply if I am 16 years past my speciality training?

You are eligible to apply because the NIH **K24** Program Announcement states that you must be no more than "approximately 15 years" past your speciality training. However, the peer reviewers will make a determination on whether you remain in a very active, productive stage of your research career.

6. Should I apply for a **K24** award if I have just completed a 5 year individual mentored career development award and have independent research support?

If you are just starting in an independent research career, you are not likely to have sufficient experience in mentoring junior investigators. Also, your application is not likely to meet the intent of the **K24** award and, if this is obvious, it could be returned to you by NCI staff without review. However, without a strong track record of independent research and mentoring, it is not likely that your application would receive an enthusiastic peer review and be competitive for funding.

7. I am a Principal Investigator (PI) on a subproject of a cooperative agreement research grant (U01) awarded to our institution. Is this considered independent support?

It depends on whether the U01 is like a single project R01 grant or like a multi-project Program Project Grant or P01. If the U01 resembles an R01 in size and complexity, a subproject would not be regarded as independent support. But if you are a leader of subproject on a U01, which is like a P01 subproject and which is peer-reviewed as a free-standing project, then this subproject is clearly equivalent to an R01 and would be considered your independent support. These kinds of interpretations are difficult to make; if you are unsure of your independent support, contact the NCI (see XI. INQUIRIES).

8. I am the chairperson for a specific protocol in a cooperative group awarded by the NCI. Is this considered independent research support?

This would not be considered the equivalent of stable, independent research support suitable for expansion and refinement of your own research or an appropriate funded research environment from which to mentor new scientists.

9. How strong must the statement of institutional commitment be with regard to the percent effort that will be protected during **K24** support?

It is important that the institution provide a **very specific plan** for reducing your current duties and providing you with the protected time for conducting your research and mentoring new scientists.

Peer reviewers will want to know how your previous duties will be accommodated by others. Letters of support for this plan from key people who must support it in the institution are also important to include with your application.

10. At the time of the application, do I have to provide a list of the individuals I plan to mentor?

You do not have to provide specific names of trainees. If you can provide names, this is likely to increase the enthusiasm of the reviewers for your application. However, you should provide information about the pool of candidates for mentoring, the types of individuals you would be looking for, and the probable assignments for these individuals on patient-oriented research projects.

11. I have an established record of independently-funded research, but do not have a track record in mentoring. Should I apply for a **K24** award at this time?

Most applicants for the **K24** will have extensive mentoring experience. You could rely on submitting a very strong "Mentoring Plan", but this is less likely to be competitive for funding versus other applications in which the candidate has a track record and a strong "Mentoring Plan." Probably, the best course to take is to develop a mentoring track record and then apply.

12. I am planning to submit a **K24** application, but will be moving to another institution. Should I submit the application now, or should I wait until I make the move to the new institution?

Please wait until you move to the new institution before submitting an application. Moving the application from one institution to another would require a new statement from the new institution guaranteeing your protected time. If reviewers know you are going to move, this would complicate their evaluation of the application.

13. What happens if I am not able to maintain independent research support during the tenure of the award?

The NCI K24 requires that you have independent, patient-oriented research at the time of the award that meets its special policy requirements (see <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-CA-00-020.html>). If you lose this support, the NCI will give you up to one year to regain it. Otherwise, your K24 grant will be terminated. Without stable support you can neither expand or refine your own research or provide a suitable funded environment for training new clinical scientists in patient-oriented research.

14. If I receive additional independent support prior to the review of my **K24** application, should I provide the NCI with this information?

Yes. You should contact the Scientific Review Administrator in the NCI, who is responsible for organizing and managing the review of your application, and arrange a time and method for providing this information. This kind of information can only strengthen the peer reviewers' enthusiasm for the application.

15. As part of the mentoring component of the **K24**, am I allowed to mentor individuals at another institution?

This could be done, but the arrangements would have to be very carefully worked out to ensure that the trainee can function off-site and benefit from your funded research environment.

16. If I have a K24 award and I would like to ask for post award changes? How do I go about this?

You must contact the NCI Grants Administration official to determine the appropriate procedures to use in making a request for post award changes in your grant. This also applies to any of your needs that require a prior approval from the NCI. In general, you will have to make a request that is signed by you and a business official of your institution. After receiving the request, the Grants Administration official will consult with the NCI scientific program staff as necessary to determine whether the request can be approved.

X. INQUIRIES (K24):

We have tried to provide you with the most complete information possible about the **K24**, as well as answer the most frequently asked questions. If you need information and explanation concerning the **K24**, please make your inquiries as follows:

A. Programmatic or scientific issues:

If you need more information and/or advice about the objectives and scope of this award, eligibility requirements, structure and organization of grant applications and peer review trends, please contact us by "clicking on" the INQUIRIES link directly below. You will be contacted promptly by one of the scientific professionals of the Cancer Training Branch of the NCI.

B. Fiscal Issues:

If you need information about the appropriate procedures for dealing with issues that involve changes in the sponsoring institution, the scope of the project as awarded, budget and period of support of the award or that involve any other issues requiring approval by the NCI or post award actions, please contact us by "clicking on" the INQUIRIES link directly below. You will be contacted promptly by one of the Grants Administration officials of the NCI.